

Constraints on Improving Speaking Skills: A Study of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers' Perceptions

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate teacher and student-related constraints on improving learners' speaking skills in Ivorian secondary schools, and to find out whether there are differences in teachers' perceptions of these constraints based on their teaching experience, and diploma. A Likert-type questionnaire was administered to 35 teachers with differing characteristics. The data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results indicated that most teachers believed that students' inability to speak English was due to their passivity in the classroom. They perceived the need to cover course content, the lack of time and resources, and teachers' lack of competence in teaching speaking skills as the major teacher related- constraints. The results finally showed that there are no significant differences in teachers' perception of teacher and student-related constraints based on their diploma and number of years teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Keywords: constraints; speaking skills; perceptions; improvement; learning; teaching.

I. Introduction

Most foreign language learners are primarily interested in learning to speak, and therefore study English in order to develop proficiency in speaking [1,2]. As a matter of fact, one of the most significant debates in foreign language teaching circles has always been about how to improve learners' speaking skill. This has been a bone of contention till the necessity and usefulness to learn the language of another country led the protagonists to consider 'speaking' as a major foreign language teaching and learning goal.

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Moreover, the advent of the Communicative Approach with its theory of communicative competence in the 70s reinforced the idea that oral communication skills should become the focal point in foreign language classrooms [3]. So, as Communicative Language Teaching soon became the official teaching approach in Côte d'Ivoire in the 90s, the educational authorities stated that English Language Teaching should be geared towards helping learners to develop their ability to use the language for communication purposes. To this end, a learning environment should be created which allows communication to be as natural as possible between teachers and students on the one hand, and between students themselves on the other hand. Today again, with the adoption of Competency Based Language Teaching (CBLT) in our country, the development of learners' speaking skills is even given much more attention. English, as the first foreign language taught, remains one of the most important subjects in secondary schools. However it must be recognized that learning to speak in a foreign language is complex [4,5,6] and the development of speaking skills in the classrooms highly demanding and a difficult endeavor ([7]. As reference [8] clearly indicates, « learners must simultaneously attend to content, morph-syntax and lexis, discourse and information structuring, and the sound system and prosody, as well as appropriate register and paralinguistic features» (p.23). Even so, the present paper does not aim to look at the inherent complexity of speaking skills. It rather aims to look at teacher and student-related constraints on the improvement of speaking skills in EFL classes. More specifically, it sets out to investigate these constraints from teachers' perspective, and to find out whether there are differences in their perceptions based on their teaching experience and diploma. Most human activities are shaped by their beliefs and perceptions [9]. In this perspective, based on the principle that an individual's behavior results from his perceptions [10,11], studies have highlighted that teachers' practices are determined by their beliefs [12]. We therefore believe that a research on how teachers perceive themselves, and their students as part of the constraints on the development of speaking skills in the classroom, could help envisage some contextual solutions to learners' foreign language learning difficulties. The specific research questions of this study are consequently as follows:

1. How do teachers perceive teaching and improving speaking skills?
2. What teacher-related factors do they perceive as constraints on improving EFL learners' speaking skills?
3. What student-related factors do they perceive as constraints on improving EFL learners' speaking skills?
4. Are there differences in teachers' perceptions of the constraints on improving EFL learners' speaking skills based on the number of years in the teaching profession and the teaching diploma?

II. Method

II.1 Context of the study

In Côte d'Ivoire, there are broadly two categories of teachers: middle and high school teachers. Middle school teachers have generally completed two years at University and followed a two-year program at the national teachers' training college for a first cycle secondary school teacher diploma. High school teachers are generally BA holders. After two years of training, they are awarded a Master's Degree in Education. This entitles them to teach from the first to the final year of secondary school classes. Both middle and high school teachers are in

charge of teaching French speaking students who take English as a compulsory subject.

II.2. Participants

A total number of 35 secondary school EFL teachers with differing characteristics related to number of years in the teaching profession, and from various secondary schools participated in the study. Table 1 summarizes their characteristics.

Table 1: Characteristics of the participants in the study

Years of experience	Diploma		Total
	Junior Secondary School (JSS)	Senior Secondary School (SSS)	
0 -5 years	7	11	18
6-10 years	8	1	9
11-15 years	3	1	4
16-20 years	0	2	2
+21years	0	2	2
Total	18	17	35

As can be seen in the table, it was a convenience sample made up of 18 Junior Secondary School (JSS) teachers or middle school teachers, and 17 senior or high school secondary school (SSS) teachers. They were selected on the basis of their availability and matching with our research schedule

II.3. Data Collection Instrument and procedure

The study drew upon a Likert-type questionnaire, inspired from an instrument developed by reference [13], and consisted of three sections. A personal information section with questions about the diplomas and years of teaching experience of the participants, a section about teaching and improving speaking skills, a section about teacher-related constraints on improving speaking skills, and a section on student-related constraints. Participants were first asked to indicate their degree of agreement with propositions in the different sections of the questionnaire, on a five point scale made up of the following items: 0-Uncertain, 1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3-Agree, to 4-Strongly Agree. Quantitative data was collected and analyzed using the software SPSS16.

III. Results

Tables 1-8 present the results about the participants’ perceptions of teacher and student-related constraints on teaching and improving speaking skills.

III.1 Teachers' Perceptions of speaking and improving speaking skills

Table 2 shows the results of the participants' degree of agreement with five propositions about teaching speaking skills.

Table 2: Teachers' degree of agreement with propositions on speaking skills

Scale items	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)	Mean	Mode	SD
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Undecided			
Propositions and percentage	1. Speaking king skills are needed for daily communication					3,91	4	,294
	91,4	8,6						
	2. Speaking skills are needed for the classes to be better conducted					3,54	4	,561
	57,1	40,0	2,9					
	3. Speaking skills are needed to transfer knowledge between courses					2,97	3	1,043
	31,4	48,6	11,4	2,9	5,7			
	4. Learning the course content is more important than speaking skills.					1,83	2	,891
	2,9	14,3	54,3	20,0	8,6			
	5. There is no need to spend time on speaking skills, they are learned naturally.					1,54	2	,919
	2,9	8,6	40	37,1	11,4			

It is apparent from this table that teachers generally agreed that speaking skills are important for communication (Mean=3, 91), for conducting classes (Mean=3, 54), and to transfer knowledge (Mean=2, 97). Also, the standard deviation scores 0,294 and 0, 571 of propositions 1 and 2 clearly indicate that the answers were clustered around the scale item 4.-Strongly agree Moreover, teachers mostly rejected propositions 4- 'content is more important than speaking skills' (Mean=1, 83), and 8- 'there is no need to spend time on speaking, they are learned naturally' (Mean=1, 54).

III.2. Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher- Related Constraints

The results of the analysis of teachers' perceptions of teacher-related constraints are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Teachers' responses to propositions about teacher-related constraints

	(4) Strongly agree	(3) Agree	(2) Disagree	(1) Strongly disagree	(0) Undecided	Mean	Mode	SD
Propositions and percentage	6. Teachers usually use lecturing strategy. They speak and students listen and answer questions					2,49	3	1,222
	20,0	37,1	25,7	5,7	11,4			
	7. Teacher tests do not focus on speaking skills					2,54	3	1,146
	17,1	45,7	20,0	8,6	8,6			
	8. Teachers do not provide sufficient time for speaking in class					2,57	3	,917
	11,4	48,6	28,6	8,6	2,9			
	9. Pre-service programmes do not stress improving speaking skills.					2,43	3	1,065
	14,3	37,1	31,4	11,4	5,7			
	10. Teachers are not given information on improving speaking skills when they start teaching.					2,31	2	1,183
	17,1	28,6	31,4	14,3	8,6			
	11. In-service programmes do not stress improving speaking skills					2,23	3	1,352
	20,0	28,6	20,0	17,1	14,3			
	12. Teachers believe only certain students can master speaking skills					2,11	3	,993
	2,9	40,0	28,6	22,9	5,7			
	13. Teachers are uncomfortable with teaching speaking skills					2,00	2	1,188
	11,4	22,9	31,4	22,9	14,4			
14. Teachers feel a need to cover content					3,14	4	1,287	
54,3	28,6	5,7	0	11,4				
15. Teachers do not have enough resources.					2,74	4	1,291	
31,7	25,7	20,0	8,6	8,6				
16. Teachers do not have enough time to get prepared for developing activities					2,91	3	1,040	
28,6	51,4	5,7	11,4	2,9				

This table is quite revealing in several ways. The first noticeable point is the participants' high degree of agreement with propositions 14 and 15 (mode=4) about the lack of resources (Strongly agree + Agree = 82, 96%), and the need to cover content (Strongly agree + Agree = 57, 4%). Also, as shown by the percentage and mean scores, participants agreed with propositions 6 (Agree + strongly agree = 57%; Mean = 2,49), 7 (Agree +

strongly agree =62 %; Mean=2,5), 8 (Agree + strongly agree =60%; Mean=2,57), and 9 (Agree + strongly agree =51%; mean=2,43). In addition, it is striking that the standard deviation scores of propositions 8 ‘Teachers do not provide sufficient time for speaking in class’ (SD=0, 917), and 12 ‘Teachers do not provide sufficient time for speaking in class (SD= 0, 993) indicate that most of the participants especially agreed with these two propositions. Furthermore, the modes (2) of propositions 10 and 13 indicate that teachers somehow believed that they did not have enough knowledge and skill, and did not feel they had the necessary resources to manage a speaking activity.

Now, what do the figures reveal about the participants’ degree of agreement with the propositions based on their teaching diploma?

Table 4 compares JSS and SSS teachers’ degree of agreement with the propositions about teacher-related constraints.

Table 4: Teachers’ perceptions of teacher-related constraints based on their diploma

Propositions		6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	
Diploma	JSS	Std. Dev	1,060	1,200	,767	1,085	1,211	1,183	,938	1,092	1,309	1,149	,808
		Mean	2,78	2,50	2,67	2,33	2,06	2,11	1,94	1,61	3,22	2,44	3,22
	SSS	Std. Dev	1,334	1,121	1,068	1,068	1,502	1,179	1,047	1,176	1,298	1,391	1,176
		Mean	2,18	2,59	2,47	2,53	2,41	2,53	2,29	2,41	3,06	3,06	2,59

We observe from table 4 that JSS teachers’ mean scores for propositions 12 (Mean= 1, 94) ‘only certain students can master speaking skills, and 13 (Mean=1, 94) ‘Teachers are uncomfortable with teaching speaking skills’ are low. For SSS teachers, the mean scores for the same propositions are 2, 41 and 2, 29. It would therefore seem that JSS teachers disagreed more with these propositions than SSS teachers. Also, for propositions 8- ‘Teachers do not provide sufficient time for speaking in class’, and 16- ‘Teachers do not have enough time to get prepared for developing activities’, JSS teachers’ standard deviation scores were 0, 767 and 0,808, indicating that many more participants in this group agreed with these propositions. SSS teachers’ standard deviation scores for the same propositions were 1,068, and 1,176, showing that the dispersion around the means scores (2, 47; and 2, 59) was wider. But, SSS teachers’ mean score for proposition 15- Teachers do not have enough resources’ is 3,06 whereas it is 2.44 for JSS teachers.

Another salient observation was that for propositions 8- ‘Teachers do not provide sufficient time for speaking in class’, 12- ‘Teachers believe only certain students can master speaking skills’, and 16- ‘Teachers do not have enough time to get prepared for developing activities’, JSS teachers’ standard deviation scores were 0, 767; 0,938; and 0,808, indicating a high degree of agreement with these propositions. SSS teachers’ standard

deviation scores for the same propositions were 1,068; 1,047; and 1,176, showing that the dispersion around the means scores (2, 47; 2, 29; 2, 59) was wider.

Overall however, Junior Secondary School (JSS) and Senior Secondary School (SSS) teachers' mean scores for most of the propositions are not very distant. For example, both group considered the 'need to cover content' (proposition 14) as a major constraint. Their mean scores for this proposition are respectively 3, 22 and 3, 06. Likewise, for proposition16- 'Teachers do not have enough time to get prepared for developing activities', their mean scores are respectively 3,22 and 2, 59. Both groups shared the opinion that 'Teacher tests do not focus on speaking skill. The mean scores here were 2, 67 for JSS teachers and 2, 47 for SSS teachers.

We now turn to teachers' perceptions in relation to their teaching experience in secondary schools.

Table 5 summarizes teachers' perceptions of teacher-related constraints based on their years of experience.

Table 5: Teachers' degree of agreement with teacher-related constraints based on years of experience

		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	N
0-5	Std. Dev	1,092	1,018	,856	1,042	1,552	1,294	1,029	1,183	1,295	1,295	,676	18
	Mean	2,61	2,72	2,56	2,56	2,06	2,44	2,00	1,89	3,17	2,83	3,11	
6-10	Std. Dev	1,167	,882	,833	1,014	,866	,928	,866	,972	1,323	1,130	,928	9
	Mean	2,89	2,56	2,78	2,44	2,33	1,89	2,00	2,22	3,00	2,44	2,89	
11-15	Std. Dev	,957	1,732	,000	,957	,500	,500	,500	1,500	,500	,577	1,500	4
	Mean	1,25	2,50	3,00	2,25	2,75	2,75	2,75	2,25	3,75	3,50	3,25	
16-20	Std. Dev	1,414	,707	,707	1,414	,707	1,414	2,121	,707	2,121	,707	1,414	2
	Mean	1,00	,50	,50	1,00	,50	1,00	1,50	,50	1,50	,50	1,00	
21+	Std. Dev	,707	1,414	,000	1,414	,000	,707	,000	1,414	,000	,000	2,121	2
	Mean	3,50	3,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	3,50	3,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	2,50	

It can be seen in table 5 that 0-5 years of experience teachers mostly believed that tests in the language classrooms do not focus on speaking skills (proposition7; Mean=2,72) and that sufficient time is not provided for speaking in class (proposition 8, Mean: 2,56). They also thought that teachers feel a need to cover content (proposition14, Mean: 3, 17) and suggested time is not sufficient get prepared for speaking activities (statement 16- Mean: 3, 11). It is notable though that for propositions 8 (SD=0,856), and 16 (SD= 0, 676) about the insufficiency of time, the answers are more clustered around the mean scores 2, 56 and 3, 11. However, the

group of 0-5 years of experience disagreed with the idea that teachers are uncomfortable with teaching speaking skills (proposition 13, Mean=1, 59). Table 5 also reveals that 6-10 years of experience teachers agreed with all the propositions on teachers-related constraints except 11- In-service programs do not stress improving speaking skills' (Mean=1,89; SD=0,928), and 12' that only certain students can master speaking skills' (proposition 12, mean=2,00 ; SD=0,866). However, unlike the 0-5 years of experience teachers, they agreed with statement 13- Teachers are uncomfortable with teaching speaking skills (Mean=2, 22). In sum, regardless of the numbers of years of experience, the participants seemed to agree with most of the teacher-related constraints suggested by the questionnaire. The most remarkable result however is that the 16-20 years of experience teachers seemed to disagree with all the propositions whereas the more than 20 years of experience appeared to agree with all them. This is certainly due to the fact that they were only 02 participants in each of these groups. Such a small number is not necessarily representative the view of a larger group.

III.3. Teachers' Perceptions of student-related Constraints

Table 6 shows the details regarding teachers' perception of student-related constraints.

Table 6: Teachers' degree of agreement with student-related constraints

(4) Strongly agree	(3) Agree	(2) Disagree	(1) Strongly disagree	(0) Undecided	Mean	Mode	SD
17. Students are afraid of being incorrect.					3,23	4	1,003
45,7	49,9	5,7	0	5,7			
Students expect that each question has a right answer					3,00	3	1,138
37,1	42,9	11,4	0	8,6			
18. Students perceive the teacher as authority					3,34	4	1,027
57,1	31,4	5,7	0	5,7			
19. Students perceive the textbook as authority					2,54	3	1,379
28,6	34,3	14,3	8,6	14,3			
20. Students prefer activities and assignments with simple factual questions and answers					3,11	3	1,132
42,9	42,9	5,7	0	8,6			
21. Students lack needed background knowledge for improving speaking skills					2,74	3	1,120
28,6	34,3	25,7	5,7	5,7			
22. Students lack interest in speaking activities					2,83	3	1,224
34,3	37,1	14,3	5,7	8,6			
23. Students lack experience in improving speaking skills in school					2,83	3	1,150
28,6	45,7	14,3	2,9	8,6			
24. Students are impatient with the difficulty of speaking					2,83	3	1,098
25,7	48,6	17,1	0	8,6			

The results, as seen in table 6, indicate that the modes are 3-Agree and 4- Strongly agree. The scale items 2- Disagree, 1-Strongly disagree, and 0-Undecided were not selected. Also, the standard deviation scores ranging from 1,003 to 1, 150 illustrate the wide dispersions of responses around the mean scores (ranging from 2, 83 to 3, 23), and suggest a general agreement with all the propositions.

Table 7 presents the results obtained from the analysis the teachers’ perception of student-related constraints based on their teaching diploma.

Table 7: Teachers’ degree of agreement with student-related constraints based on diploma

		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	N
JSS	Std. Dev	1,023	1,110	1,029	1,46528	1,305	1,145	1,079	,924	,725	18
	Mean	3,11	3,06	3,33	2,50	3,06	2,61	2,89	2,83	3,06	
SSS	Std. Dev	,996	1,197	1,057	1,32565	,951	1,111	1,393	1,380	1,372	17
	Mean	3,35	2,94	3,35	2,5882	3,18	2,88	2,76	2,82	2,59	

No significant differences were found in teachers’ perception based on their diploma. Both JSS teachers and SSS teachers agreed with all the propositions regarding student-related constraints. It also appears in the table that the smallest mean score was 2, 50 for SSS teachers, and 2, 59 for JSS teachers. Interestingly, many more JSS than SSS teachers agreed with propositions 24- Students lack experience in improving speaking skills in school (Mean 2,93; SD=0,924) , and 25- Students are impatient with the difficulty of speaking (Mean=3,06; SD=0,75). On the other hand, many more SSS than JSS teachers agreed with the propositions 17- Students are afraid of being incorrect, (Mean=3,35; SD=0,996) and 21- Students prefer activities and assignments with simple factual questions and answers (Mean=3,18; SD=0,951). What then are the results in terms of teachers’ years of experience in the profession?

Table 8 provides the answers of the respondents based on the years of experience in the teaching profession.

It can be seen from the data in table 8 that regardless of the number of years in the teaching profession, teachers agreed with almost all the propositions. The lowest mean score for the 0-5 years of experience was 2, 50 and the highest 3, 28. For the 6-10 years of experience, the lowest score was 2, 56 and the highest 3, 44. As far as the 11-15 years of experience are concerned, the lowest mean score was 2, 25 and the highest 3, 50. Finally, for the more than 21 years of experience, the lowest score was 2 and the highest 4. This group therefore did not believe that students lacked interest in speaking activities (Proposition 23). However, the most striking result to emerge from the data is that the teachers with 16-20 years of experience appeared to disagree with all the propositions. But let us note that here again, the small number of respondents in this group does not really have

a significant impact on the results.

Table 8: Teachers’ degree of agreement with student-related constraints based on years of experience

Experience		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	N
0-5	Std. Dev	,958	1,023	,984	1,58	1,188	,873	1,278	1,13	1,227	18
	Mean	3,28	3,11	3,44	2,50	3,00	2,94	3,11	3,00	2,72	
	Std. Dev	,726	1,302	,707	,927	,726	1,33	,707	,601	,667	9
6-10	Mean	3,44	2,78	3,33	2,88	3,56	2,56	3,00	2,89	3,22	
	Std. Dev	,816	,577	1,00	1,25	,957	,816	,957	,816	,500	4
11-15	Mean	3,00	3,50	3,50	2,25	3,25	3,00	2,75	3,00	2,75	
	Std. Dev	2,12	2,121	2,82	2,12	2,12	2,12	,707	,000	2,12	2
16-20	Mean	1,50	1,50	2,00	1,50	1,50	1,50	,50	,00	1,50	
	Std. Dev	,000	,707	,707	1,41	,707	2,12	1,414	,707	,707	2
21+	Mean	4,00	3,50	3,50	3,00	3,50	2,50	2,00	3,50	3,50	

IV. Discussions

The present study was designed to investigate EFL teachers’ perception of teacher and student-related constraints on improving secondary school learners speaking skills and to find out whether there are differences in teachers’ perceptions based on their teaching experience and diploma.

- *Teachers’ perception of teacher and student-related constraints*

The results indicate that despite their awareness of the importance of speaking skills, teachers focused more on lecturing in their classrooms.

In this communicative era, the teacher’s role as a “facilitator of learning” suggests that learners have to do most of the talking in the classroom. Yet, some teachers still have a hard time withdrawing from the scene. It may be that non-native teachers are tempted to demonstrate their speaking ability to their students. This results in a high teacher talking time which limits students’ opportunity to practice speaking English in the classroom. Their attitude may also be the aftermath of an insufficient mastery of learner-centered teaching practices. Another possible explanation may be class size and administrative pressure. In a country where the average number of students per class is around 70, and where teachers have the obligation to complete the school program by a given date, many tend to resort to whole-class or teacher-fronted teaching even if they are more or less practically acquainted with Communicative Language Teaching and CBLT. As a consequence, fluency oriented

activities like role plays, dramatization, or even pair and group works, which require time and patience, are downplayed. Teachers simply teach by asking questions to which students have to answer.

Another important finding was that teachers felt insufficiently trained, and considered that they do not have enough resources for teaching speaking skills.

With the advent the competency based approach, teachers are required to design their own material, find their own resource. They can no longer rely on their usual text-book based language teaching. This calls for a change of habit, and requires new competencies that they may not have developed. As a consequence, some still abide by what author [14] named a 'technicist approach', characterized by a focus on students' comprehension of content knowledge and simply viewing teaching in terms of how effectively knowledge base is transmitted to students, instead of being ready to explore new teaching strategies when necessary.

An unanticipated finding of this study was teachers' belief that only certain students can master speaking skills. This unveils an unconscious belief that a group of students in the classroom will always learn well, whereas the others will learn less well, fail or just get by references [15] and [16]. So, learners' needs, experiences, and learning styles are overlooked because teachers may not consider these elements as part of the learning process.

Surprisingly also, the results indicated that most teachers believed that students lacked confidence, preferred factual questions, lacked interest and knowledge. Such a finding undoubtedly relate to learners' anxiety and teachers' attitude in the classroom. In other words, foreign language learning largely depends on what happens 'within' learners (anxiety, inhibition, self-esteem, risk-taking, self -efficacy) and 'between' the people in the classroom. When under the influence of 'negative' emotions, students can raise an emotional filter that prevents them from interacting freely in the classroom [17]. As author [18] states: «instructors who believe their role is to correct students constantly when they make any error, (...), who believe that the teacher should be doing most of the talking and teaching, and who think their role is more like a drill sergeant's than a facilitator's may be contributing to learner language anxiety» (p.448).

- *Teacher and student related constraints based on diploma and experience*

This research did not find significant differences in teachers' perceptions based on diploma and on the number of years teaching EFL. Such a result was unexpected, but suggests that most of them encountered the same problems with teaching and improving their students' speaking skills. These problems are namely, students' passivity, the lack of information, the lack of time and resources, the need to cover content at the expense of the development of learners' speaking skills. To our understanding, they basically exemplify teachers' poor understanding of their role in the language class: to support learners in taking active roles by providing them with experiences that meet their interests and needs.

It is essential to understand that students do not necessarily come to the classroom already motivated to speak the foreign language. The teacher has to create that motivation and interest by placing the learner in a comfortable, supportive and collaborative environment where he can work actively, free from fear of making mistakes, and where he wants to use English and have a 'real' purpose in using it ([19]. Hence, by clinging to

the old paradigm, in which they appear as the authority instead of being facilitators, co-communicators, or advisors, teachers unconsciously induce learners into believing that their role is to rely only on the teacher as the primary sources of information, and that the focus in the English class is on learning content knowledge, practicing form-focused exercises in class and drawing from a repertoire of language forms and functions if they wish to communicate in English.

V. Conclusion

The study has shown how teachers perceive teacher and student-related constraints on teaching and improving speaking skills. It also revealed the uniformity of their perceptions of these constraints. In this perspective, the results mostly suggest that teachers are aware of the difficulties in teaching speaking skills but believe that students are the ones who need to make efforts to speak English in the classroom. This attitude clearly indicates that they are not yet fully involved in the paradigm change going on with the advent of CBLT in our country. Such results also highlight the need for more teacher information on how to implement student-centered approaches with a focus on how to generate the learners' interest in a topic, how to get them to do something orally with the language either individually, or by interacting in pairs, in groups or through discussions. Moreover, a major recommendation from this study is that teachers should consider themselves as resource providers who do not restrict the teaching and learning of speaking skills to the official textbooks, but create the environment for learners to use the language while using their own additional resources, ideas, instruments or self-made materials.

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